

The Sailors' Snug Harbor, Dormitory (Building A)  
Richmond Terrace  
New Brighton  
New York  
Richmond County  
New York

HABS No. NY-5474

HABS  
NY  
43-NEWBR  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
801 19th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

## THE SAILORS' SNUG HARBOR, DORMITORY (BUILDING A)

Address: Richmond Terrace, between Tysen Avenue and Delafield Place, New Brighton, New York, Richmond County, New York.

Present Owner: The Trustees of The Sailors' Snug Harbor in the City of New York.

Present Occupant: The Sailors' Snug Harbor.

Present Use: Dormitory.

Statement of Significance: The Sailors' Snug Harbor is a home for aged seamen opened on Staten Island in 1833. This building, completed in 1879, is one of an outstanding group of five Greek Revival dormitories which overlook the Kill Van Kull leading into New York Harbor.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: See photo-data book for The Sailors' Snug Harbor, HABS No. NY-5473, for this information.
2. Date of erection: On September 27, 1876, the Richmond County Gazette reported that

As soon as the new addition, which the Trustees of the Sailors Snug Harbor are building to their great structures, is completed, there will be accomodation for about one hundred and forty more inmates, which will swell the number of inmates in this haven of rest to over six hundred.

The Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the Late Robert Richard Randall, Esq. . . ., published in 1876, stated that "an additional building for the accomodation of inmates" was being constructed. A plaque inside the building states that it was erected in 1879.

3. Builder: A plaque inside the building states that R. P. Smyth was the builder.
4. Important old views:
  - a. Photograph of dormitory facades. Negative 21023A, Map and Print Room, New-York Historical Society.

- b. Three photographs of the dormitory facades, dated "c. 1890." Staten Island Historical Society.

B. Bibliography

Note: See photo-data book for The Sailors' Snug Harbor, HABS No. NY-5473, for additional bibliographical material.

[Article on Sailors' Snug Harbor.] Richmond County Gazette,  
September 27, 1876.

Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the Late Robert Richard  
Randall, Esq. . . . New York: Published by Order of the  
Trustees, 1876.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural interest and merit: The Sailors' Snug Harbor is a home for aged seamen opened on Staten Island in 1833. This building, completed in 1879, is one of an outstanding group of five Greek Revival dormitories which overlook the Kill Van Kull leading into New York Harbor.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Number of stories: Two stories plus full basement above ground level.
2. Number of bays: The front (north) facade is three bays wide; the east and west sides are each ten bays wide.
3. Over-all dimensions: The front and rear facades measure approximately 48'-0"; the sides measure approximately 122'-0".
4. Layout, shape: The building is rectangular in plan.
5. Wall construction, finish and color: The front facade is of stone; the sides and rear are of brick laid up in running bond and painted a light yellow. Exposed stone basement walls are painted gray. There are stone pilasters at the corners of the building and a flat brick frieze on the east and west sides.
6. Porch: A two-story portico with six Ionic stone columns extends the full width of the north facade; nine stone steps run the width of the portico also. There is a stone balus-

trade on the east and west sides of the porch.

7. Chimneys: Metal smokestack near center of the roof.

8. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Two doors, each with lower panel of wood and upper part of four-light glass, at center of front facade; above door is two-light transom. Wood and glass storm vestibule. Basement doors also have wood and glass panels. All sash is of wood.
- b. Windows: Basement windows have three-over-six-light double-hung sash; first and second story windows have six-over-six-light double-hung sash with stone pediments, which on side and rear are painted white. In the fifth bay from the north on the first story of the west elevation is a large round-headed window with six-over-nine-light double-hung sash, flanked by two small round-headed windows with two-over-two-light double-hung sash. Directly above on the second floor level there is a similar set of windows, except that the center window has four-over-four-light double-hung sash. All sash is of wood.

9. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Low, gabled roof with modern shingles and intersecting gable above center of east and west sides; bull's-eye window in east and west gables. Gable end forms roof of portico on front facade.
- b. Cornice: Wooden, painted white.

#### C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plans, by floor: All floors: Central hallway running north to south, bisected near center by hallway running east to west. Bedrooms open off north-south hallway.
2. Stairway: Iron stairway on west wall near intersecting hallways.
3. Flooring: Modern tile.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceiling are plastered; walls are painted green, the ceiling white.
5. Doorways and doors: Doors are of paneled wood with one upper section louvered; wooden transom above door. Doors are painted white.
6. Hardware: Modern hardware.

7. Lighting: Fluorescent lights.
8. Heating: Central.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: The front facade faces north. This building is the most westerly of the five dormitory buildings.
2. Sidewalks: Stone.

Note: For additional photographs of the building see photo-data book for The Sailors' Snug Harbor, HABS No. NY-5473.

Prepared by Diana S. Waite  
Architectural Historian  
June, 1968